

LAKE STURGEON MANAGEMENT 2006

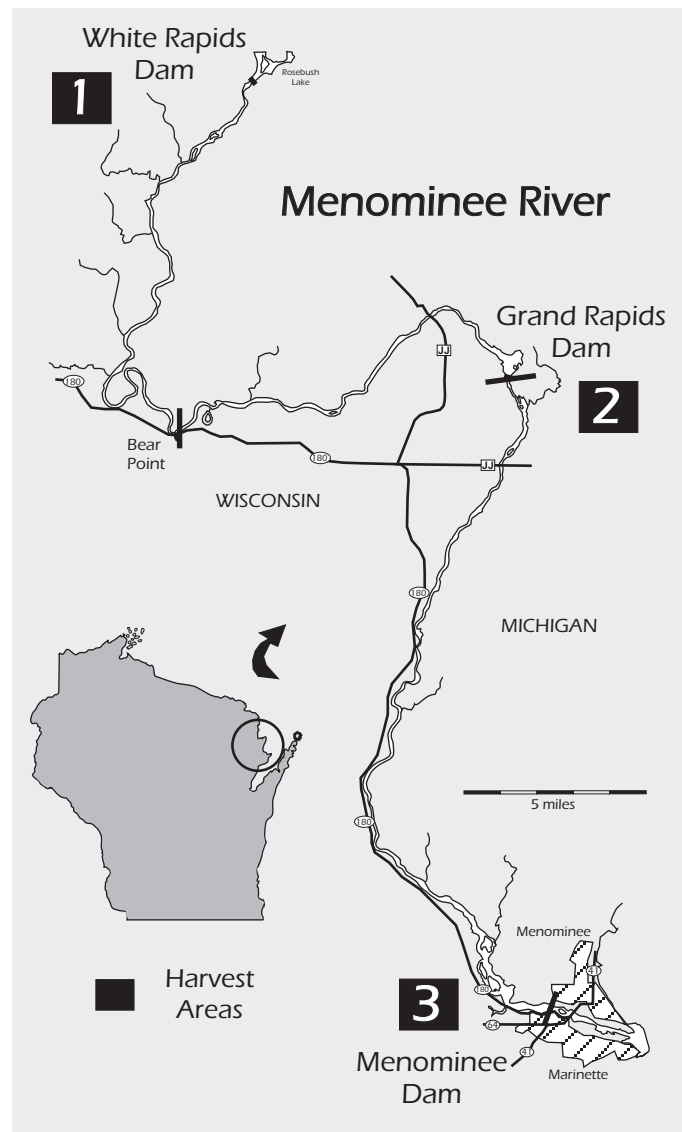
The Menominee River

Although a mandatory lake sturgeon harvest registration system was enacted in 1983, licensed, modern day harvest of lake sturgeon on the Menominee River has occurred since 1946. Most of the harvest occurs near three hydroelectric dams on the river at White Rapids, Grand Rapids, and Menominee Dam, although limited harvest does occur throughout the river. The hook and line harvest of lake sturgeon from the Menominee River has increased to the following in selected years:

80 in 1989,
109 in 1998,
167 in 1999,
185 in 2001, and
210 in 2003.

In 2000, the minimum length limit differed in alternating years with a 70" limit in even years and a 50" limit in odd years. The harvest in the three 70" length limit years (2000, 2002, and 2004) averaged 0 fish. While the alternating year's length limits reduced the overall harvest, the average harvest for the last 6 years (1999-2004) was 94 fish.

Recent surveys have indicated that lake sturgeon harvest in the Menominee River exceeds acceptable levels. Continued harvest at present levels will likely decrease the population of lake sturgeon in the Menominee River.



The Menominee River is a boundary water with joint management with the Michigan DNR. The agencies have reviewed current population data and proposed the following regulations to reduce lake sturgeon harvest.

1. The fishery will be catch and release only below the Menominee Dam
2. There will be a 60-inch minimum length limit on all waters above the Menominee Dam.
3. The season length will be reduced to the first Saturday in September to September 30th.

Over 70% of the harvest occurs below the Menominee Dam and this harvest is impacting broader restoration efforts in northern Lake Michigan. The proposed rule changes will stabilize and likely increase the population size of lake sturgeon in this river.

Lake Sturgeon Management on Inland Waters



Department of Natural Resources' biologists have been analyzing information on the state's inland lake sturgeon populations. Like the Menominee River, there is an increasing popularity of lake sturgeon fishing and a resulting increase in lake sturgeon harvest over the last several years. Consequently, biologists have become concerned about overharvest in our inland lake sturgeon hook and line fisheries, as well. Within the next year, there will likely be regulations proposed to reduce the hook and line harvest on inland lake sturgeon populations. Anglers will have the opportunity to comment on any proposed regulation changes through the Department's public hearing process. Look for future details!